

January 14, 2009 7:30 PM

Rep. Luján Stands up for Uninsured Children

### *Bipartisan Legislation to Provide Health Coverage for Children Passes the House*

Washington, DC - Rep. Ben Ray Luján joined 288 of his colleagues in support of bipartisan legislation to provide health care coverage for 11 million low-income, uninsured children. The State Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (SCHIP) passed the House 289 to 139. The legislation, H.R. 2, will help working families across the state who are struggling to provide health care coverage for their children in this troubled economy.

"Families in New Mexico are struggling during these difficult economic times, and today I proudly joined my colleagues in support of an expansion of health care coverage for low-income, uninsured children that will help children and families throughout the state," said Luján. "In a time of rising unemployment, it is especially important to make sure that parents are able to get their children the health care they need to stay healthy and active."

The bipartisan legislation will preserve health care coverage for the 7.1 million children currently covered by SCHIP and extend coverage to 4.1 million uninsured children who are currently eligible for the program, but not enrolled. In New Mexico, 16,525 children receive health care coverage through the successful program. This legislation will preserve coverage for these children and work toward covering the 93,000 New Mexican children who lack health insurance coverage. This bill increases the SCHIP allotments for New Mexico by 277%--from \$52 million to \$196.2 million.

"Too many children do not have access to health care," said Luján. "By passing this legislation in the House, we are investing in our children's future. Healthy children attend school, participate in after school activities, and are better equipped to put themselves on a path to success. Today, the House passed this important legislation and took a step toward preserving health care coverage for 7.1 million children currently covered by SCHIP and insuring 4 million children who are eligible for the successful and cost-effective SCHIP program, but who are not enrolled. This vote was an important step to getting our country back on track and helping families in New Mexico."

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) was created in 1997 to provide health care coverage for children in families that earn too little to afford private health insurance for their children, but too much to qualify for Medicaid.

[Go back](#)